The 2004 system would rely on a radar in Alaska built in the 1970's that was never designed for missile defense, that has no capability to differentiate the target warhead from decoys, that has never been tested against a long-range ballistic missile, and that the administration never plans to test against a long-range missile.

No part of the system has been tested against realistic targets, and there are no plans to test the integrated system as a whole before it is deployed. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has said that this is just an ''initial capability'' in a program that ''will evolve over time'' and will ultimately ''look quite different than it begins.''

What the Pentagon has tried not to emphasize is that this ''initial capability'' is likely to be marginally effective, if it works at all. Declaring this untested, marginal system ready to deploy is like declaring a newly designed airplane ready to fly before the wings have been attached to the airframe and the electronics installed in the cockpit.

In his previous tenure as Secretary of Defense, Rumsfeld had to preside over the dismantling of the Safeguard missile defense system which he had inherited and which was operational for less than six months because the technical limitations of the system rendered it ineffective. The development, deployment and dismantling of the Safeguard system cost the taxpayers tens of billions of dollars without enhancing our national security in any way. This is an experience that we should not want to repeat.

Since that time, Congress has instituted reforms in the Defense Department to help prevent the premature and costly fielding of unproven systems. Congress established the Pentagon's Director of Operational Test and Evaluation to oversee major defense programs and ensure they are adequately tested and demonstrated to work before they are deployed—in other words, that any new system is proven to ''fly before we buy.''

Congress also established the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, which gives the military services oversight over weapons programs to ensure that they perform well enough to be useful on the battlefield.

The Bush administration, however, has unwisely exempted all missile defense programs from the normal oversight of these important organizations. As a result, these programs are not subject to normal review by senior military and civilian acquisition officials, and they are not subject to the normal operational test and evaluation process.

Instead, the secretary of defense has delegated many of the functions of these offices to the Missile Defense Agency, effectively making that agency responsible for overseeing itself. History shows that without real oversight, major weapon systems don't work well, suffer serious schedule delays and have major cost overruns.

The Bush administration should re-establish effective oversight of missile defense programs by the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, and other oversight organizations with the Department of Defense. Rather than rushing to deploy an unproven national missile defense system, the administration should focus on completing the development of a missile defense that will be effective against likely threats and that is shown to work through proper testing.

## DUCHENNE MD AWARENESS WEEK

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, this week is the Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy's Duchenne MD Awareness Week. It is also the 2-year anniversary of the introduction of the MD CARE Act, which I was pleased to cosponsor with our late colleague, Senator Paul Wellstone, to raise awareness and expand Federal support for medical research to find a cure for this devastating disease.

The need for this legislation was first brought to my attention by one of my constituents, Brian Denger, of Biddeford, ME, who has not one, but two wonderful boys—Matthew and Patrick—with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. The Dengers—who also have a daughter, Rachel, with juvenile diabetes—are a loving and courageous family whose strength and spirit inspired me to become involved in advocating for more research funding for muscular dystrophy.

Until I met Brian, I really did not know much about Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. He was the first to tell me that 1 in 3,500 male children worldwide will be born with the disease and lose the ability to walk by age 10. He told me about the terrible progression of the disease. As it progresses, muscle deterioration in the back and chest begins to put pressure on the lungs, making it more and more difficult for the child to breathe.

What really caught my attention was the fact that the lifespan of children suffering from this disease has not been extended in any significant way in recent years. Current treatment options for boys like Matthew and Patrick are minimal and aimed simply at managing their symptoms in an effort to optimize their quality of life for the limited time they have with us.

Given our Nation's wealth of scientific expertise coupled with the tremendous infusion of resources we have poured into the NIH in recent years, we can and should do more for families like the Dengers. That is why I joined with Senator Wellstone in introducing the MD CARE Act, which President Bush signed into law in December of 2001.

Since the passage of this important legislation, the National Institutes of Health have established grants for the creation of three Centers of Excellence in Muscular Dystrophy Research, which will provide focused research and development in all phases—including basic, clinical, and transitional—of the research spectrum. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have developed an in-depth surveillance and epidemiology study of Duchenne and Becker muscular dystrophy. A population-based epidemiological study of Duchenne and Becker muscular dystrophy will provide the extensive data necessary to inform research decisions, standards of care, physician training, and public health approaches to assist families living with Duchenne and Becker muscular dystrophy.

The NIH and the CDC are to be commended for the progress they are making in their research efforts related to muscular dystrophy. These efforts to improve the quality and length of life for thousands of children diagnosed with muscular dystrophy are invaluable, and I commend the researchers and all of the families who have worked so hard to combat this devastating disease.

## THE ''COLUMBIA'' TRAGEDY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, it has been said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. In the same way, a journey of a million miles must be completed with one final step.

It was at the moment of that ultimate step on February 1, 2003, that the Space Shuttle *Columbia* could go no further. In its last moments, America's first shuttle took with it the brave souls of its crew. It is those seven heroes and human beings I honor today, on behalf of every Oregonian who mourns them.

In recent years, the names of shuttle astronauts have seldom been known by most Americans. Now, the names of the *Columbia* Seven have entered the nation's consciousness through the floodgates of our shared grief: Flight Commander Rick Husband; Pilot William ''Willie'' McCool; Payload Commander Michael Anderson; Mission Specialist Kalpana ''K.C.'' Chawla; Mission Specialist David Brown; Mission Specialist Laurel Clark; and Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon.

As the recent chair of the Subcommittee on Science, Technology and Space, I came to know firsthand that America's astronaut corps, and indeed the teams of engineers and experts that support them, are the best this country has to offer. It seems that this particular group of astronauts was the best of the best. And they were not only America's finest, they were India's finest and Israel's finest as well.

Many of this crew were devoted husbands, wives, fathers and mothers. They leave a dozen children behind them who deserve this nation's sympathy and gratitude for the sacrifice their parents' final mission required.

But the *Columbia* crew also leaves behind their ideals of persistence and patriotism, the humility and humor that called so many people to love them so much, and above all their love of learning and life. Each brought a different background and unique experience to this mission. All defeated great odds and exhibited enormous courage in becoming the astronauts they hoped to be.

From childhood, Rick Husband, Willie McCool and David Brown cherished dreams of liftoff and landing, of spaceships and spirits aloft.

Laurel Clark dove to the depths of the sea in her naval career before reaching the heights of heaven on *Columbia*.

Michael Anderson was able to break even the barrier of sound, even the barrier of Earth's atmosphere as one of the nation's few African American astronauts.